Reviewer's report

Title: A qualitative study examining the Sustainability of Shared Care in the delivery of palliative care services in the community

Version: 3 Date: 1 April 2013

Reviewer: Larry Librach

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MAJOR REVISIONS
1. In a second review, I wonder now whether this article is about the sustainability of shared care programs or about community palliative care programs in general. It is not clear whether any of the teams provide direct care to orphaned patients i.e. those without family physicians. It seems that most of the discussion is about community palliative care and the need for support from the 3 pillars as they are described. There is discussion of care delivery including family physicians and community nurses but not a clear focus on shared care and the outcomes of that care for the patient and the system especially in the pillars of LHIN and province.

2. Instead of tables 1 and 2, the data of which could be handled in the text, I would request a list of the questions used in the semistructured interviews. This would relate more to the results and analysis.

3. We do work in a system that involves institutional care and yet there is little mention of the role of health care institutions including residential hospices, palliative care units or hospitals with community palliative care programs.

DISCRETIONARY REVISIONS
4. The diagrams are not really useful to me. The authors state that the width of the 3 pillars is indicative of the role but then in the diagram with the sustainability askew, the height of the columns or pillars is the issue. I would ditch the diagrams especially figure 1.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

No conflicts of interest